

Organochlorine Propaganda

SIR,—Some say that propaganda induces people to believe statements that are not rationally convincing. A. H. Macpherson (*Nature*, 237, 413; 1972) writes that "persistent pesticides are believed" to be responsible for the nearly complete disappearance of the peregrine falcon. This is the theme of much propaganda; certainly many people believe it, but others do not. For example, the Wilson Committee¹ regarded the evidence as not precise enough to establish the postulated causal relationship. The Neuberger Committee² adopted an agnostic attitude. The Mrak Committee³ doubted if the organochlorine insecticides occur

naturally at sufficient levels to produce effects on reproductive success and population numbers.

We have been urged to accept the belief that organochlorine insecticides are the cause of population declines in predatory birds partly because no other acceptable cause has been proposed. On the contrary, the drastic decline in numbers of almost all birds of prey in the 19th and early 20th centuries has been attributed to the increased efficiency of firearms and the spread of game preservation. According to Cramp⁴, reduced activity of gamekeepers accounted for an improvement in populations after that and until the 1950s. Barber⁵ suggested that there has, in the 1960s, been an increase in

gamekeeping and considered that attacks on predatory birds with trap, poison and gun are a feature of this period. We must not jump to conclusions about this, but clearly the pesticide hypothesis is not the only one.

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¹ *Advisory Committee on Pesticides and other Toxic Chemicals*, 148 (HMSO, 1969).

² *Third Report of the Research Committee on Toxic Chemicals*, 69 (Agricultural Research Council, 1970).

³ *Report of the Secretary's Commission on Pesticides and their Relationship to Environmental Health*, 677 (US Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1969).

⁴ Cramp, S., *British Birds*, 56, 124 (1963).

⁵ Barber, D., *New Scientist*, 54, 212 (1972).

Obituary

Dr W. R. Thompson

DR WILLIAM ROBIN THOMPSON, FRS, former Director of the Commonwealth Institute of Biological Control, died on January 30, 1972. With his death entomology in general and biological control in particular have suffered a severe loss.

W. R. Thompson was born in London, Ontario, on June 29, 1887, the son of the late William Thompson, editor of the *Canadian Agricultural Weekly*. Educated at the Universities of Toronto and Cornell, where he obtained his BSc and MSc respectively, Thompson went on to do research at Cambridge between 1914 and 1915, a DSc at Paris in 1921 and a PhD at the University of St Maximin in 1924. During this lengthy period of university education from 1909 to 1919, Thompson also worked for the United States Department of Agriculture as an entomologist for four years, and for the Royal Navy as a bacteriologist from 1915 to 1919. In 1919 he again returned to work for the USDA where he undertook extensive work on the natural enemies of the gypsy moth and the European corn-borer, basing his work on the principles of biological control.

In 1928 Thompson was appointed assistant director of the Imperial Institute of Entomology, and in 1947 he became director of the Imperial Parasite Service which subsequently became the Commonwealth Institute of Biological Control, a post which he held until his retirement in 1958.

Thompson's career in entomology and biological control was long and distinguished. He was one of the pioneers of the scientific study of the subject and

he also studied the mathematical theory of population growth in connexion with parasite-host relationships and its bearing on population control. He also did considerable research on the taxonomy and systematics of tachinids, work he continued after his retirement.

While assistant director of the Imperial Institute of Entomology and director of the CIBC, Thompson was responsible for the extensive development of the control work in the institutes. In the early years much of it was carried out in Europe for Canada, New Zealand and Australia, but later, with the establishment of research stations in the West Indies, India, Pakistan, Argentina and California, similar work was possible on a much broader basis.

Many honours were accorded Thompson during his working life. He was made a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1933 and of the Canadian Royal Society in 1949. From 1947 to 1958 he edited the *Canadian Entomologist* and in 1956 he was President of the 10th International Congress of Entomology. He was a honorary fellow of, among others, the Royal Irish Academy and the Royal Entomological Society. He won many awards and medals as tributes to his work and was a honorary DSc of the Universities of Bordeaux and Carleton.

As well as publishing numerous articles and papers and a book (*Science and Common Sense*, 1937), Thompson was also responsible for the *Catalogue of the Parasites and Predators of Insect Pests*, an invaluable reference work to the literature of biological control.

With his death entomology has lost a personality whose impact in the field of biological control will be of lasting academic and economic value.

Dr Vilmos Várterész



DR VILMOS VÁRTERÉSZ, director of the Frédéric Joliot-Curie National Research Institute for Radiobiology and Radiohygiene, Budapest, Hungary, died after a brief illness on May 24, 1972.

Dr. Vilmos Várterész was born on August 9, 1917. He took his doctor's degree at the Kossuth Lajos University for Medicine in Debrecen. In 1942, as a young physician he started working in the Lóránd Eötvös Radium and X-Ray Institute, Budapest. There, for more than eleven years, he was engaged in the various fields of tumour therapy, in particular studying the biological effects of ionizing radiations, a subject that became the focus of his life's work. In 1957, as an already acknowledged expert of the field, at the request of the Hungarian Ministry of Health, he founded the Institute for Radiobiology of which he became the direc-

tor. Now began the most creative era of his scientific career during which he produced 145 articles and his book *Radiobiology* which was published both in Hungarian and German.

In 1959, in recognition of his scientific achievements, he became a candidate member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. With the advancing years he participated in the work of more and more national and international associations and organizations. To mention only the most important, he became the Vice-President of the Joint Committee for the Medical Application of Isotopes of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and Ministry of Health, a member of the presidium of the National Atomic Energy Committee of Hungary, of the Hungarian Society for Nuclear Medicine, the Secretary for Hungary of the European Society for Radiation Biology, of the National Committee of the International Radiation Production Association, the member of the Expert Advisory Panel on Radiation of the World Health Organization.

His premature death in the prime of his life is a grievous loss both to the institute and to radiobiology.

Announcements

University News

Dr A. J. Ellison, Queen Mary College, London, has been appointed professor and head of the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, City University.

Professor Bruno A. Boley, Cornell University, has been appointed dean of the Technological Institute of the Northwestern University.

The personal title of professor of chemistry has been conferred on **Dr J. E. Prue**, reader in the Department of Chemistry, University of Reading.

Appointments

R. A. Peddie, a member of the Central Electricity Generating Board, has been appointed part-time member of the UK Atomic Energy Authority.

Mr R. St J. Walker has been appointed secretary of the Science Research Council in succession to **Dr W. L. Francis**.

Miscellaneous

The Experimental Pathology Club Prize has been awarded to **Dr A. E. Butterworth**, University of Cambridge, for his essay "Cytotoxic Effects of Antigen-Transformed Lymphocytes *in vitro*".

The Chalmers medal of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene has been presented to **Dr W. W. Macdonald** of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine.

Mr F. P. Thomson is preparing a biography of the late **Alan Dower Blumlein** who was chief engineer of the EMI Research Department. Anyone who knew Mr Blumlein or who would care to contribute an assessment of his position in the history of technology should write to Mr Thomson at 39 Church Road, Watford WD1 3PY, Hertfordshire.

Reports and Publications

not included in the *Monthly Books Supplement*

Great Britain and Ireland

The British Petroleum Company Limited. BP Statistical Review of the World Oil Industry, 1971. Pp. 24. (London: The British Petroleum Company Limited, 1972.) [15]

Furniture Development Council. 23rd Annual Report for the year ending 31 December 1971. Pp. 6. (Stevenage, Herts.: Furniture Development Council, 1972.) [15]

Advisory Committee on Oil Pollution of the Sea. Annual Report for 1971. Pp. 20. (Sandy, Beds.: Advisory Committee on Oil Pollution of the Sea, 1972.) [15]

The Heating and Ventilating Research Association. Annual Report for 1971. Pp. 32. (Bracknell, Berkshire: The Heating and Ventilating Research Association, 1972.) [15]

The Ciba Foundation for the Promotion of International Co-operation in Medical and Chemical Research. 1971 Report. Pp. 67. (London: The Ciba Foundation, 1972.) [25]

The Zoological Record. 1969, Vol. 106, Section 6: Vermes. Part A: Platyhelminthes, Nemathelminthes, Nematode, Mesozoa. Compiled by Eileen Mitchell, R. A. Bray and Stephen Prudhoe. Pp. vi +148. £6.50; \$15.60. 1969, Vol. 106, Section 19: Mammalia. Compiled by the Staff of the Zoological Society of London. Pp. vi+361. £12; \$29. (London: The Zoological Society of London, 1972.) [25]

List of British Palaeontologists. (Glasgow: The Palaeontological Association, Hunterian Museum, 1972.) [35]

Department of Trade and Industry. Patents in the Common Market. (Unofficial translation of a Second Preliminary Draft of a Convention for the European Patent for the Common Market and of First Preliminary Drafts of Implementing Regulations and of Rules Relating to Fees, prepared by the "Community Patent" Working Party.) Pp. 92. (London: HMSO, 1972.) 60p net. [35]

Innovation in Higher Education. Edited by Colin Flood Page and Harriet Greenaway. (Papers presented at the Seventh Annual Conference of the Society, December 1971.) Pp. 97. (London: Society for Research into Higher Education, 20 Gower Street, WC1, 1972.) £1.60. [35]

Fisons Report and Accounts for 1971. Pp. 32. (London: Fisons Limited, 1972.) [35]

Index, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1972. Edited by Michael Scammell. (A New Magazine on Censorship.) Pp. 1-164. Published quarterly. Subscriptions £2 for one year, £5 for three years. Students' rate £1.50 for one year. (London: Writers and Scholars International, 1972.) [45]

Greenwich Time Report, Royal Greenwich Observatory. Time and Latitude Service, 1971, April-June. Pp. 209-222. (London: Science Research Council, 1972.) [45]

Report of the Rugby School Natural History Society for the year 1971. Pp. 24+1 plate. (Rugby: Rugby School Natural History Society, 1972.) [55]

The Education and Training of Teachers—a Statement by the Council of the Institute on the James Report. Pp. 14. (London: University of London, Institute of Education, 1972.) [55]

Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London. A: Mathematical and Physical Sciences. Vol. 272, No. 1221: A Discussion on Problems Associated with the Subsidence of Southeastern England. Organized by K. C. Dunham and D. A. Gray. Pp. 79-274+plates 1-3. (London: The Royal Society, 1972.) £5; \$14. [55]

Report by the Hydrographer of the Navy for 1971. Pp. 36. (NP 130.) (Taunton, Somerset: Hydrographic Department, Ministry of Defence, 1972.) [85]

Department of Education and Science. Education and Science in 1971. Pp. 51. (London: HMSO, 1972.) 36p net. [85]

Foreign and Commonwealth Office—Overseas

Development Administration. Annual Report of the Directorate of Overseas Surveys for the year ended 31st March 1971. Pp. iv+76+9 maps. (London: HMSO, 1972.) £1.35 net. [85]

Fabian Tract No. 413: Labour and the Economy—A Socialist Strategy. By Michael Stewart. Pp. 35. 35p. Young Fabian Pamphlet No. 30: British Entry—Labour's Nemesis. By James Bellini. Pp. 24. 25p. (London: Fabian Society, 1972.) [85]

The British Food Manufacturing Industries Research Association. Annual Report for 1971. Pp. 50. (Leatherhead: BFMIRA, 1972.) [85]

Ordnance Survey. Professional Papers, New Series, No. 23: The Development of Digital Maps. By Col. R. C. Gardiner-Hill, OBE. Pp. 14+7 figures. (Southampton: Ordnance Survey of Great Britain, 1972.) [85]

Language in Society, Vol. 1, No. 1, April 1972. Edited by Dell Hymes. Published twice a year. Pp. 1-176. Annual subscription £4; \$12. Single parts £2.50; \$7.50. (London and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1972.) [105]

University of Strathclyde. Annual Report 1970/1971. Pp. 132. (Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, 1972.) [105]

British Standards Institution. The Use of SI Units. Pp. 28. (London: British Standards Institution, 1972.) [125]

Building Research Station Digest, No. 141: Wind Environment Around Tall Buildings. Pp. 8. (London: HMSO, 1972.) 5p. [125]

Natural Environment Research Council. Institute of Hydrology—Research 1971-72. Pp. viii+67. (Wallingford, Berkshire: Institute of Hydrology, 1972.) [125]

The Health Education Council. Report for the period 1 April 1970 to 31 December 1971. Pp. 26. (Wembley, Middx.: The Health Education Council, 1972.) [125]

Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London. B: Biological Sciences. Vol. 264, No. 858: Biostratigraphical Dating of the Early History of the South Atlantic Ocean. By R. A. Reymont and E. A. Tait. Pp. 55-95+plates 3-5. (London: The Royal Society, 1972.) £1.40; \$3.90. [125]

Other Countries

Smithsonian Year 1971: Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution for the year ended 30 June 1971. Pp. vi+247. (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1971. For sale by US Government Printing Office.) \$1.25. [293]

Journal of Statistical Computation and Simulation, Vol. 1, No. 1, January 1972. Edited by Richard G. Krutchkoff. Subscription Rates (per volume post-paid), 4 issues per volume. Libraries: USA/elsewhere \$41.50/£17.30, Great Britain £15.85. Individuals who warrant the journal is for their own use and order direct from the publisher: USA/elsewhere \$14.50/£6, Great Britain £5.50. (New York, London and Paris: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1972.) [293]

AMBIO, Vol. 1, No. 1, February 1972. (A journal of the Human Environment Research and Management.) Pp. 140. Published six times yearly. (Stockholm: AMBIO, Box 23136, S-10435, 1972. Subscriptions to Universitetsforlaget, PO Box 307, Blindern, Oslo, Norway.) US\$13; Skr. 60, Nk and Dk 84. [293]

US Department of the Interior: Geological Survey. Water-Supply Paper 1991: Quality of Surface Waters of the United States, 1966. Parts 1 and 2: North Atlantic Slope Basins and South Atlantic Slope and Eastern Gulf of Mexico Basins. Pp. xvi +984. \$4. Professional Paper 701-A: Hydrology of Two Small River Basins in Pennsylvania Before Urbanization. By R. Adam Miller, John Troxell and Luna B. Leopold. With a section on Observations of Stream Fauna by Ruth Patrick and Robert W. Grant, Jr. Pp. iv+57. 75 cents. Professional Paper 732-A: Channel Movement of Meandering Indiana Streams. By James F. Daniel. Pp. iii+18. 35 cents. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1971.) [293]

Handbook of Electroencephalography and Clinical Neurophysiology, Vol. 4, Part B. Pp. 64. (Amsterdam: Elsevier Publishing Company, 1972.) [303]

Towards Self-Reliance in Agriculture. (IARI Research Bulletin, New Series, No. 7.) Pp. 82. (New Delhi: Indian Agricultural Research Institute, 1972.) [44]

Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association. Annual Survey Report 1970/1971. Pp. 20. Washington, DC: Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association, 1972.) [44]

Canada Department of Agriculture: Research Branch. Monograph No. 6: Arctic Adaptations in Plants. By D. B. O. Savile. Pp. 81. (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1972.) [44]

US Department of the Interior: Geological Survey. Water-Supply Paper 1999-C: Water Resources of the Upper White River Basin, East Central Indiana. By L. W. Cable, J. F. Daniel, R. J. Wolf and C. H. Tate. Pp. v+38+4 plates. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1971.) [54]

US Department of the Interior: Geological Survey. Water-Supply Paper 1532-D: Effects of Grazing on the Hydrology and Biology of the Badger Wash Basin in Western Colorado, 1953-66. By G. C. Lusby, V. H. Reid and O. D. Knipe. Pp. v+90+1 plate. \$1. Professional Paper 683-D: Climatic Implication of a Late Pleistocene Ostracod Assemblage from Southeastern Virginia. By P. V. Valentine. Pp. iii+28+4 plates. 70 cents. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1971.) [64]

Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History. Vol. 147, Article 3: Comparative Myology